

# SENATOR TOM UDALL: A CHAMPION FOR DEMOCRACY REFORM AND VOTING RIGHTS



Tom Udall believes that our democracy is at a crisis point, and he has been a longtime champion for bold reforms to restore the power of the people.

Tom understands that any progress on the American people's priorities—from combatting climate change to securing affordable health care— must begin with reform that prevents the wealthy and influential from drowning out the power of American voters.

Tom has worked throughout his career in Congress to get big money out of politics, make it easier to vote, and restore accountability to Washington.

Tom led the entire Senate Democratic caucus in introducing the For the People Act, a sweeping reform package to make it easier to vote, to end the dominance of big money in politics, and to restore accountability to public service. Tom led a constitutional amendment to overturn the Supreme Court decision in Citizens United that unleashed a flood of secret money into American politics.

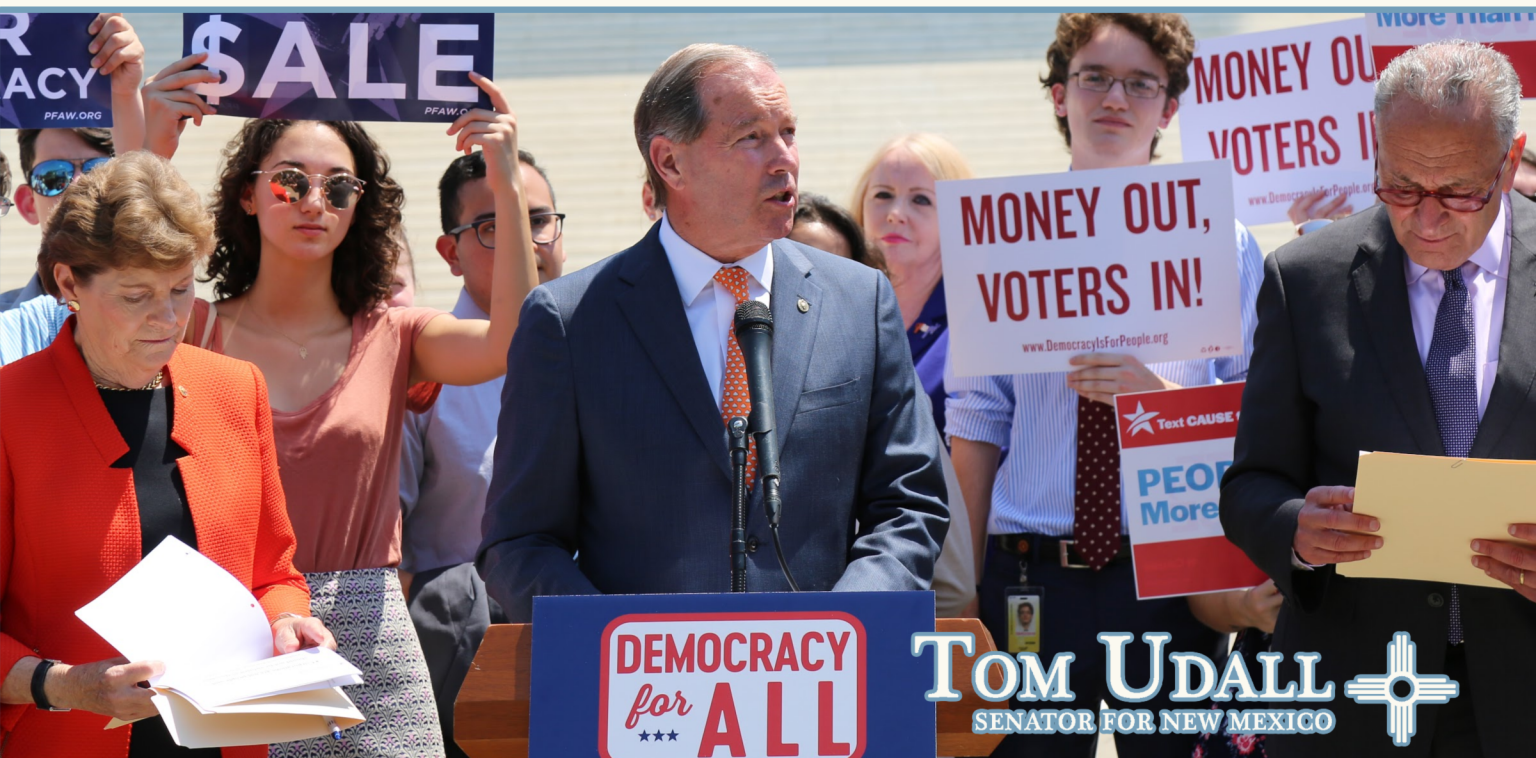


*“American democracy has reached a crisis point. Too many Americans have every reason to believe that their government no longer answers to them— and most people are either losing faith in the system or have already lost it completely.*

*Voting rights are under assault, foreign adversaries interfere in our elections, special interest money drowns out the voices of regular people, and so-called public servants use their offices to help themselves and their friends.*

*Enough is enough. We must unrig the system and take back our democracy— to return it to the hands of its rightful owners, the American people.”*

**-U.S. Senator Tom Udall**



# ENDING THE REIGN OF BIG MONEY IN POLITICS, STOPPING VOTER SUPPRESSION, AND FIGHTING CORRUPTION



Tom has taken action to restore the power of the people in our democracy. The fundamental principle of one person, one vote is threatened by the dominance of big, secret money in American politics, and the tide of voter suppression. That's why Tom has been the leading champion for comprehensive reforms to our political system.



Tom led all 47 members of the Senate Democratic Caucus to introduce the For the People Act. The landmark legislation would restore the promise of American democracy by:

- Making it easier, not harder, to vote, with common-sense reforms to end voter suppression, which too often targets minority communities.
- Ending the dominance of big money in politics, and shining a light on secret money.
- Ensuring that public officials work for the public interest by tackling corruption.





The **For the People Act**, which passed the House of Representatives in 2019 as H.R. 1, was modeled off of Udall's **We the People Democracy Reform Act**, introduced in both 2016 and 2017.

Tom also introduced the **Democracy For All Amendment**, co-sponsored by every Senate Democrat, a constitutional amendment that would overturn the disastrous Supreme Court ruling of *Citizens United v. FEC*, help get big money out of politics, and put power back in the hands of the American people. Udall has introduced a constitutional amendment to overturn decisions like *Citizens United* and *Buckley vs. Valeo* in several Congresses.

This amendment restores the ability of lawmakers to limit money in politics, and makes it clear that money does not equal speech and corporations are not people.

Millions of Americans have petitioned Congress in support of this amendment—and twenty states, and more than 800 cities and towns, have passed formal resolutions in favor of it.

Udall's amendment earned 54 votes on the Senate floor in 2014.



Tom has championed many legislative efforts to ensure our elections reflect the will of the people, and to ensure our government answers to all Americans, including:

- The **Native American Voting Rights Act**, legislation Tom has authored to provide the necessary resources and oversight to ensure Native Americans and Alaska Natives have equal access to the electoral process.
- The **DISCLOSE Act**, which requires organizations spending money in elections to disclose their donors. The bill would also crack down on shell companies by requiring companies spending money in elections to disclose the true owner of the company, so election officials and the public know who is behind the money.
- Legislation that would **modernize the presidential public financing system** so that publicly-funded candidates can compete against big-dollar donors in presidential elections.
- Legislation to reform the toothless Federal Elections Commission (FEC) so there's a cop on the beat to ensure free and fair elections.
- The **John Lewis Voting Rights Act**, a bipartisan bill honoring an American civil rights hero that would restore the landmark Voting Rights Act, end the scourge of minority voter suppression, and help preserve the legacy of John Lewis.

# MAKING THE SENATE WORK FOR THE PEOPLE



Tom has been calling for real rules reform in the Senate since 2010, including reforming the filibuster and ending the arbitrary 60-vote threshold. Tom, whether in the majority or the minority, has introduced reforms so the Senate gets back to working for the people.

- Udall has long advocated for **reform of the filibuster, including an end to the arbitrary 60 vote requirement, and restoring a “talking filibuster” to allow for robust debate in the Senate – but not gridlock.** As New Mexico’s junior senator in 2010, Udall introduced a resolution that would prompt the Senate to exercise its Constitutional Option to reform the rules governing the chamber at the beginning of each session.
- In 2011, Udall first introduced a **bipartisan rules reform package** to update Senate rules, reform the filibuster and increase transparency and accountability and promote open and honest debate about legislation. He reintroduced the resolution in 2013 and 2015, and the Senate adopted key procedural reforms for the first time in many years, including reducing the 60 vote threshold for most nominations.
- Whether in the majority or the minority, Udall has continued to call for the Senate to reform the filibuster and increase transparency within the Senate.

# PROTECTING DEMOCRACY IN OUR COURTS



Tom joined his Senate colleagues to prepare the Captured Courts Report on Democracy, a review underscoring the need for legislation to limit the corrupting influence of money to influence American judicial selections.



The report documents the threats to American democracy from the decades-long effort by large political donors and the Republican Party to install a conservative majority in the federal judiciary and on the Supreme Court.

